

"BOILINGBROOK"

King of Prussia Road near Hares Lane
Radnor, Radnor Township
Delaware County
Pennsylvania

HABS No. PA-1000

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ADDENDUM
FOLLOWS...

PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Eastern Office, Division of Design and Construction
120 South Third Street
Philadelphia 6, Pennsylvania

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

"BOLINGBROKE"

Street Address: King of Prussia Road near Hares Lane, Radnor,
Radnor Township, Delaware County, Pennsylvania

Present Owner: Mr. and Mrs. Roy J. McKee

Present Occupant: Owners

Present Use: Residence

Brief Statement
of Significance: Although there are sections in this house dating
from c. 1700 and 1792, many additions and altera-
tions (mostly twentieth century) have transformed
this early fieldstone farmhouse into a mansion
in the grand scale.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Original and subsequent owners: 1792-1811, David Brooke;
1811-1828, Brooke heirs; 1828-1866, John Stacker;
1866-1887, John Stacker, Jr.; 1887-1901, heirs of John
Stacker, Jr.; 1901-1950, Ledyard Heckscher and heirs;
1950 to date, present owners. Ownership of pre-1792
house not known. The building will eventually pass to
adjoining St. Martin's P.E. Church for parish purposes.
2. Date of erection: The oldest portion of the original
house was dated "about 1700"; portion to east (porch
side) dated 1792 by datestone.
3. Architect, builder, suppliers etc.: Original building
details not known. J. Brognard Okie of firm of Duhring,
Okie & Ziegler was 1901 and 1908 architect.
4. Original plans, construction etc.: No information
5. Notes on alterations and additions: In 1901 Mr. Heckscher
built a three-story wing on west, adjoining what became
the middle or oldest ("1700") section of house; he added
a third dormer on the third floor front of the old sec-
tion and had a new door and ground-floor window cut in
rear, although the front remained in the old form, except
for new doorway.
In 1908 the center or 1700 section was pushed out,
so original rear wall was lost in that section. Another

wing was added on west so house by this time was doubled in size. The original front walls in both 1792 and "1700" section remain today except that the present front door was Okie's 1901 doorway. The new continuous roofline at rear installed at this time was extended with third floor as an overhang and columns run up, thus making a two-story verandah.

6. Important old views and references: Important photograph of house showing what is now rear facade in 1897 (thus only the "1700" and 1792 sections of house) appears on p. 231 of Rev. S. F. Hotchkin, Rural Pennsylvania (Philadelphia: 1897). A similar old picture showing what is now the front facade belongs to the present owners.

A series of interesting views of the house after the 1901 alterations appear on p. 25 of House and Garden magazine for January, 1904.

B. Historical Events Connected with the Structure:

No important historical events known. "Traditionally it was a farmhouse that was visited by Washington ... it has ... the ghost of a drover who is said to have been murdered here." (Hotchkin, p. 221)

The 1792 datestone (DB 1792) bears the initials of David Brooke, its builder, who died intestate in 1811; his Administrator, Samuel Maulsby, eventually conveyed it on April 4, 1828 (Delaware County Deed Book S, p. 80) to John Stacker, farmer; Stacker by deed of February 14, 1866, conveyed it to John Stacker, Jr. (Delaware County Deed Book R-2, p. 691); the latter died on April 25, 1887, leaving a wife, Mary G.; she died November 14, 1899 and her heirs conveyed the house to Ledyard Heckscher, December 7, 1901 (Delaware County Deed Book M-10, p. 520), who made the major changes to the house.

C. Likely Sources Not Yet Investigated: None

Prepared by

E. F. Dallett

June
Date 1958

For Radnor Historical Society

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: This enlarged stone farmhouse has undergone extensive alterations in the twentieth century in the traditional style, which have almost obliterated the early ("1700" and 1792) sections.

2. Condition of fabric: Excellent; now maintained as a private residence.

B. Technical Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: Not recorded
2. Foundations: Stone
3. Wall construction: Stone. Front wall in old (both "1700" and 1792) section and part of wall adjoining on east side (porch side) is original; the remainder early twentieth-century construction.
4. Porches: There is a wooden porch on the east side (see photographs). No further information
5. Chimneys: Three chimneys of stone; one at east end original; center chimney largely original. These two chimneys originally straddled gable end peaks, but roofs were rebuilt so they are now below the peaks. (Only the east end chimney has one original fireplace, second floor.)
6. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: Panelled reproduction "Colonial" doors. Wooden hood introduced over front door.
 - b. Windows and shutters: Small pane, double hung, sash windows of twelve and twenty-four lights; those at northeast end may be original; others almost entirely replacements. No information on shutters
7. Roof:
 - a. Shape, covering: Gable roof introduced in present shape in 1908. Wood shingles.
 - b. Cornice, eaves: Adzed and pegged rafters. No further information
 - c. Dormers: Installed in present form in 1908 (see photographs)

C. Technical Description of Interiors:

1. Floor plans: Oldest portion probably had two rooms, front and back, on each of two floors. The 1792 section to the east also originally had two rooms on each floor.

Present plan: First floor - Wide center hall, one large parlor to left, three other main rooms to right (not including kitchen and service wing)
Second floor: Nine bedrooms and four baths
Third floor: Three bedrooms and two baths

2. Stairways: Main stairway, ground to third floor in center hall. Service stairway ground to second floor.
3. Flooring: All modern, hardwood.
4. Wall and ceiling finish: Plaster, painted and/or papered. Reproduction panelling below chair rails and around fireplaces in three of principal rooms of twentieth century installation. Simple panelling and mantel shelf around second floor northeast bedroom above parlor in 1792 section is only original woodwork in entire house.
5. Doorways and doors: No information
6. Trim: Ornate in two first floor rooms to right of center hall. Wood panels throughout house, with "Colonial" reproduction fluting around archways on first floor.
7. Hardware: Modern installation of reproduction features.
8. Lighting: Electricity
9. Heating: Coal furnace. Six fireplaces, all used. The fireplace and mantel in second floor east bedroom is original (see photograph) and original flue remains in center of house (at end of what was "1700" section) but entirely rebuilt within house as far as exterior appearance is concerned.

D. Site:

1. General setting and orientation: Set in rolling, wooded and well-landscaped lawns. The building faces northeast.
2. Enclosures: Hedges
3. Outbuildings: Original springhouse (dating from 1748, according to 1901 purchaser) was incorporated into house itself when west end extended in 1908. Garage with apartment over and detached kitchen (now bathhouse for pool) built after 1908.

4. Walks, driveways etc.: None of interest
5. Landscaping, gardens etc.: Boxwood garden outlined with brick and well-kept borders.

Prepared by

F. J. Dallett

Date

June 1955

For Radnor Historical Society

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